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Reporting Beyond the Pale: UK news discourse on drones in Pakistan

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Reporting Beyond the Pale: UK news discourse on drones in Pakistan

This article on drone strikes in Pakistan offers a distinctive empirical case study for critical scholarship of counterterrorism. By asking how cosmopolitanism has developed through UK news *discourse* it also provides a constructivist contribution to the literature on drones. I argue UK news discourse is not cosmopolitan because it focuses on risk and places the Other beyond comprehension. US and UK Governments networked counterterrorism operations have complicated accountability and while a drive for certainty promoted more scrutiny of policy, news media outlets, academics and activists turned to statistical and visual genres of communication that inhibited understanding of the Other.

Keywords: constructivism, drones, terrorism, critical discourse analysis, cosmopolitanism, Pakistan, UK news media

Introduction

The use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), or “drones”, is on the rise. Over 70 states possess UAVs and global investment in armed UAVs is projected to continue rising in the coming decade (Davis *et al.* 2014, 7-8). Accordingly, there is already a wealth of scholarly literature on the use of drones by Western governments, but it is focused largely on strategic and ethical questions. Scholars supportive of armed UAVs, such as Daniel Byman (2013), propose that drones ‘work’ because they kill terrorist leaders and deny them sanctuaries. However, Audrey Cronin (2013) has countered that drones are ineffective because civilian casualties encourage al-Qaeda recruitment and damage relations between governments. Furthermore, Trevor McCrisken (2013, 28) has noted how extensive use of lethal drone strikes raises questions about the Obama administration’s commitment to combatting terrorism in ‘morally principled ways’.

Constructivist perspectives on debate concerning drones are less common. Wali Aslam (2015) did provide some insight in his examination of arguments put forward by the

US Government and Pakistani politician Imran Khan, where the topic of casualties was politically appropriated to construct threats and securitise the actions of actors. My approach offers another constructivist take, but with significant differences. I employ methods derived from critical discourse analysis to assess UK news media and its contextual fields, thereby facilitating an assessment of how discourse on drones is constructed and develops through the communications of a wider range of actors.

I ask how cosmopolitanism - as openness and a positive disposition towards the Other – has developed in UK news discourse on the use of drones in Pakistan. Intuitively, it may seem unlikely for cosmopolitanism to emerge as discourses surrounding conflict and terrorism are associated with fear (Furedi 2007) and a negative approach to the Other - particularly regarding those communities that are considered to be an Other because of their perceived threat to “us” (Hillyard 1993). However, the discussion of political violence and abusive acts, including acts related to counterterrorism in distant places, does not uniformly preclude the perspective of the Other and is not devoid of sympathy for the Other as a victim of violence. Ethical, legal and strategic debate surrounding drone warfare is often concerned with whether UAVs minimise collateral damage (Strawser 2013; Plaw 2013) or lead to unnecessary deaths or further conflict (Benjamin 2012; Aslam, 2014 and 2011; Cronin; 2013). Alternatively, Ulrich Beck (2006) has even noted the potential for shared risk to cultivate a “cosmopolitan outlook” - an awareness of interdependence and a “civilizational community of fate” based on the risks faced by everyone in the 21st century; and it is a similar form of risk-based cosmopolitanism that the analysis below finds to be prominent.

A number of critical studies of counterterrorism operations have been undertaken (for instance Jackson [2005]; or, Jarvis and Lister [2014]), including those focused on risk management (Amoore and de Goede, 2008b). However, the research below provides a distinctive empirical study because of its focus on UK news discourse surrounding the use of

drones in Pakistan. This facilitates analysis of a British perspective that is of particular significance because of the partnership between the UK and the US Governments in security operations. In July 2010, *The Sunday Times* reported that the United Kingdom General Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) provide information to the CIA to assist with targeting missile strikes from UAVs (Leppard 2010). The UK Government would neither confirm nor deny this allegation, but the US and UK governments have long been lauded as having a “Special Relationship”, variously described as being based on ideology, culture and, most commonly, security (Wallace and Phillips 2009). In fact, ambiguity surrounding the details of US-UK cooperation in the case of drones simply provides another level of interest for this study on cosmopolitanism, where factors concerning identity, strategic partnerships and shared security priorities are significant.

In fact, this case study was chosen specifically because of the particular uncertainty surrounding the armed UAV program. In addition to the lack of clarity regarding the role of governments, details on casualties are also unclear. It is *estimated* that between 2004 and 2014, 400 strikes killed over 2,400 people in Pakistan (Woods 2015, 93); yet precise information on the casualties is unclear and clarity regarding longer-term effects of the use of armed drones is also missing (Carvin 2012; Strawser 2013, 22). While poorly corroborated information is not atypical in communications of warfare or counterterrorism, this is an extreme case and therefore provides a prime opportunity to examine how news discourse and Self-Other relations are constructed amidst uncertainty surrounding the instigators and subjects of lethal drone strikes.

This article is concerned with both *how* cosmopolitanism emerges in UK news discourse on drones and *how* it is limited in this context. Regarding the limitations, it also facilitates politically pertinent suggestions for change to governmental, activist, academic and news media practitioners. These proposals suggest how the semiotic hierarchy and

mechanisms of knowledge creation resulting from the production and reception of news discourse - otherwise known as the order of discourse (further elaborated below on pages 6 and 7) - could be more politically and ethically open. Here I found government and militaries maintained a high position in the order, challenged only intermittently by activist groups or journalists.

I argue that news discourse on drone strikes places the Other beyond compassion, and in many ways “beyond the pale” in terms of recognised norms of security, journalism and politics. According with Ulrich Beck’s thesis, at times risk does demand co-ordination and co-operation between Self and Other, but this has side effects. Transnational security issues and communications have complicated both policy and scrutiny of policy. I will outline how the need for certainty is prompted by concern regarding threats faced by “us”, but also for assurance that we are not disregarding the Other. A desire for scrutiny of the cosmopolitan nature of actions leads to a turn to different genres of communication in the news media and contextual fields. Yet despite providing some crucial insight, these genres inhibit the building of relations between the Self and the distant Other. Only a change in perceived risk faced by key actors fundamentally impacted on the order of discourse. Ultimately, with the aim of some de-escalation of conflict and animosity, this paper advocates less sanitised and decontextualised reporting and more careful use of language describing those perceived to be possible enemies.

Cosmopolitanism and Critical Discourse Analysis

Cosmopolitanism is interpreted variously in academia and has been divided into moral, political and cultural schools of thought (Delanty 2009, 53; Robertson 2010, 4-6); and, related forms of global justice and legal and civic cosmopolitanism have been noted (Brown & Held 2010, 9-13). Primarily though, for the purposes of this discourse analysis, I look for a cosmopolitanism where the perspective of the Other is included. Following Zygmunt

Bauman (1991) I view the Other as: “The opposite side of the first, thus abnormality is the other of the norm, woman the other of man, stranger the other of native, enemy the other of friend, them the other of us.” The Other is therefore defined by their difference to the Self. This could be determined by any characteristic of individuals or collectives, such as their actions, social grouping, beliefs or religion. As the generation of hostility towards the Other is regarded as a key means of escalating animosity and conflict (Jowett and O’Donnell 2012), the above conceptualisation of the Other facilitates analysis of how news coverage of various groups - including Waziris, Muslims, Taliban or Al-Qaeda - might escalate or de-escalate the potential for violence.

For the Other to be genuinely included within a discourse they must not only be allowed to speak, but to be both heard and understood (Husband 2000) and a grasp of the necessary context is imperative (Silverstone 2007, 121). Without communication of relevant factors the Other may be conceived as “beyond the pale”, in other words beyond comprehension or compassion (Silverstone 2002, 770; Silverstone 2007, 73). Understanding of relations towards the Other can require knowledge of their broader position and cultural perspective, but also an awareness of the role of “us”, the collective Self, in this relationship. A cultural cosmopolitanism is searched for that encourages engagement and openness between Self and Other (Hannerz 1990). Therefore, cosmopolitan news discourse would foster engagement between Selves and Others in these respects; for instance, by reporting the views of Waziri’s on the UAV programme. While scholars have long advocated the importance of journalism that scrutinises policymakers in a democracy (Schudson 2008), a cosmopolitan approach to reporting would also keep checks on how a government’s actions impacted on the foreign Other.

I adopt critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a theoretical framework and this fits my approach to cosmopolitanism and the methods chosen. CDA views objects of research to be

only partly semiotic and it can accommodate non-semiotic analysis too. Indeed, critical discourse analysts (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 2) encourage interdisciplinary studies and for concepts – like cosmopolitanism - to be borrowed from other disciplines to improve analysis. To provide transparency and to invite other scholars to extend this line of enquiry, it is necessary to outline how this research was conducted.

In order to gain an insight into the relations between the communicative events, their semiotic and non-semiotic context and how texts are produced and received, I will employ the concepts of the “order of discourse” and intertextuality. For Norman Fairclough (2003) the “order of discourse” is the semiotic social order and hierarchy – where networks of social practices in communication are established. Fairclough borrowed the term from Foucault (1970), who outlined the rules, norms and systems that form the “order of discourse” and determine what could be said or thought and therefore what could constitute discourse and knowledge. For Fairclough, this is a site of potential domination and the domain of struggle for cultural hegemony – where power depends on consent or acquiescence, not force (Fairclough 2003). Fairclough (2003, 220) proposes that the order of discourse is the “discoursal aspect of a network of social practices”. If networks of practice in the order of news discourse are to be better understood, the production and reception of texts is relevant and investigation of intertextuality can reveal more about this.

Intertextuality concerns how texts influence other texts. It has been described by Fairclough (1992, 84) as:

the properties texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo and so forth.

Intertextuality therefore concerns the phenomenon where texts draw on other texts and voices. However, I am interested in more than just explicit links between texts. I will also

look for what Meinhof and Smith (2000) have termed “diffuse intertextuality”. Diffuse intertextuality looks beyond straightforward deterministic relationships between texts and specific sources. Fairclough (2003) calls this “interdiscursivity” and has broken this down analytically into three parts: (i) it is concerned with the repetition of discourses (representations of aspects of the world); (ii) with genres (the ways discourses are communicated); and (iii) styles (identities, ways of being and roles of those creating the discourse or of those represented). These three features may not be attributable to specific sources in a linear deterministic manner and when certain texts or voices that might have been included are actually excluded, this is often even more difficult to identify (Fairclough 2003, 39-61). The solution to these problems adopted by this research is to engage in contextual analysis and systematically look for patterns and note dissimilarities and omissions across texts and practices in different institutions relevant to the news media.

As argumentation is integral to political discourse (Finlayson 2007), I also assess the arguments employed. I suggest that the knowledge and claims on which argumentation is based can be developed across discourse and therefore could also be assessed intertextually. Following Reisigl and Wodak’s (2009) more detailed empirical approach to CDA and assessment of argumentation, I have chosen to examine the use of *topoi* across the texts – in other words, the themes referred to in support of argumentation. In Fairclough’s terms, these could be representations or discourses; but *topoi* would be especially likely to be plausible parts of argumentation or premises used to reach conclusions. For example an individual *topos* could be concerning legality in international law, or a perceived threat, or indeed, any phenomena that might be implicitly or explicitly referred to, to support a claim as part of an argument (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 101-110).

I also consider nomination. Nomination is the naming of actors, objects, events, processes, actions or other phenomena. It occurs in a number of ways including the simple

use of proper names, or through more figurative linguistic devices such as tropes or metaphor. Analysis of nomination of significant phenomena and of key actors, both on an individual or collective basis, will be undertaken. (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 90-4). Finally, I assess predication. This is the discursive qualification of actors or phenomena either positively or negatively (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 90-4). This could occur through favourable or unfavourable evaluations, possibly through reference to stereotypes, or through presupposition or allusion (Reisigl and Wodak 2009: 94). Nomination and predication can help analyse the construction of what Fairclough (above) termed style and identity.

Selection of texts

The news media was chosen because it can play a role as a meta-field, and conduit for communication between other influential political fields in the consideration of issues of rights and terrorism (Nash 2009, 50-1); including government, activist, legal and academic fields. I have also chosen to focus on the mainstream news media, as opposed to social or alternative media, because it is more likely to provide a coherent authoritative discourse for this study of cosmopolitanism and counterterrorism practice. However, the contextualised nature of this study demands that I make some references to other texts outside of news media.

In order to select texts for analysis, I made a chronological list of events related to news media discourse on US drones strikes from 2002 until 2013 (see appendix for list of assessed news media texts). I recorded topics within the discourse in news media texts and in contextual legal, governmental, activist and academic fields. I analysed texts produced by six UK based news organisations and their sister publications issued on Sundays: the *BBC News* website, *The Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday*, *The Guardian* and *The Observer*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* and *The Sun*

and *The News of The World* (until it was discontinued on 7th July 2011). They were selected because they were popular outlets in printed format and on the Internet (Ponsford 2013; OFCOM 2012) and because they represented a range of opinion and formats. I used the BBC website for its output and retrieved newspaper texts from lexisnexis.com .

I looked for moments of conflict or crisis in the news media where actors disagreed and discourses clashed – what Fairclough (1992) termed “cruce moments”. When selecting communicative events for analysis Fairclough (1992, 230) suggests the researcher identifies “cruces” and “moments of crisis” from a large corpus of text: for example, a moment of disagreement where opposing views engage in argument. Such moments of conflict in the discourse are often the best occasions to observe various modes of power acting to dominate discourse, or, also, conversely, a successful challenge to the hegemonic power structure. They provide an opportunity to focus on the “actual ways in which people deal with the problematization of practice”. Fairclough (1992, 230) explains “[t]hese are moments in the discourse where there is evidence that things are going wrong: a misunderstanding which requires participants to ‘repair’ a communicative problem”. My focus on a broader range of texts in addition to the extrapolation of Fairclough’s notion of a “cruce” is chosen to mitigate problems of bias in the selection of data.

The selection of texts chosen for assessment in this article was made to allow assessment of the most prominent characteristics relevant to cosmopolitanism, followed by examination of cruce moments that challenge them. When placed in the context of activist, academic and legal court cases, the most conspicuous feature of UK news media coverage on drones was the lack of information and consequent *uncertainty* surrounding drone strikes. Accordingly, the style of uncertainty is considered in the first section, followed by analysis of the most reported events – the reporting of the killing of high-value-targets, noting the particular nominations and topoi related to the Other that emerged through these events. In

order to highlight the difference surrounding the killing of high-value-targets, I also analysed the news media texts of all drone strikes in March 2010 and March 2013, when a number of strikes took place that did not kill high-value-targets. In the second section attention is given to different communicative genres that have been used in an attempt to communicate more about the overall casualties of drone strikes and challenge the focus on high-value-targets. This includes a small section discussing images, again commenting on the particular styles and nominations of the Self and Other that are repeated interdiscursively and intertextually. Finally, in the third section, a key challenge – and cruce moment - is considered surrounding the strike at Datta Khell in North Waziristan on 17th March 2011.

Reporting networked drone strike operations

1 Uncertainty punctuated by reporting on high-value-targets

This section considers how, in a context of scarce information, governments hold a high position in the order of news discourse on drones. However, government comments (or lack thereof) also promote ambiguity and uncertainty in knowledge constructed through news discourse on drones. As such, the call for more clarity and information has become a topos in argumentation surrounding the reporting of drones. This section highlights these points, noting how particular identities and styles of ‘our’ governments are developed in this context. It also demonstrates how nominations of those targeted by UAV strikes in the news discourse could compound Othering and further support arguments for drone strikes. And, finally, it argues that perceived risk is an underlying factor in the construction of identities of the Other.

It is the US Government that is the central protagonist in the UAV programme. However, it was not until 30th January 2012, eight years into the Pakistan drone programme, that US President Barack Obama officially admitted its existence (The White House 2012). Accordingly, each of the nine BBC reports assessed in March 2010 reaffirmed a key

omission - that “[t]he American military does not routinely confirm drone operations”. The consistent lack of comment and then the uncritical recognition of this norm evident in this quote predicated an uncritical construction of the secretive style surrounding the US Government on drone strikes.

Despite being largely anonymous in the news media government representatives still hold a key position in the order of discourse. Indeed, with US Government silence attention has turned to unnamed Pakistani officials. Agents of the Pakistani Government were influential sources in all of the eleven UK news reports I assessed in March 2010. In these articles the number of casualties and the nomination of “militants” was determined by unnamed sources, who were anonymous Pakistani officials (see below, pages 20-21 for more discussion of this particular nomination). For example, a BBC article typically lead as follows: “Two missile strikes by US drone aircraft have killed at least 12 suspected militants in north-west Pakistan, security officials say” (BBC 2010b). No alternative accounts are cited and therefore the Pakistani authorities act as a gatekeeper for the information flow from the areas targeted by drone strikes. However, contrary to their public condemnation, (see Shah 2008 in *The Guardian*), reports of Pakistani officials’ comments suggest at least tacit acceptance of drone strikes (BBC 2010a). Awareness of this has added an additional element of doubt with regard to news discourse on the provenance of attacks in Waziristan.

With governments apparently acting together and releasing sporadic or unreliable information, attributing responsibility becomes more difficult. Yet attributing responsibility and facilitating denunciation of perpetrators can be an important part of relating to the situation of others (Boltanski 1999, 59). In networked warfare a number of actors may be implicated in the acts. While some responsibility could be attributed to the US Government after it confirmed the drone strikes program in January 2012, the level of responsibility attributable to the UK Government is still opaque. The UK Government (UK Border Agency

2013, 27) criticises “extrajudicial killings by the security forces” in Pakistan but neither confirms nor denies assisting in the operation of the United States drone programme. Other potential authoritative UK news sources have also provided little illumination. On 21st December 2012, the UK High Court ruled that such cooperation was highly plausible, but that it could not comment on drone strikes in Waziristan out of respect for the state sovereignty of the United States (Khan vs. SSFCA [2012] EWHC 3728 (Admin.)). This judicial review of UK Government policy did receive coverage in six articles in the UK news media surveyed, but the Executive government was not challenged by the legal field. Consequently, UK news media commentary on the UK Government role is largely non-existent and it provides little insight into the level of agency wielded by UK Government actors or the legitimacy of policy.

The inability to disentangle the roles and positions of the UK and US Governments could promote identification of these governments as one and the same. They could constitute a homogenous ‘us’ that “Western security agencies” work for - for example, see *The Daily Telegraph* (McElroy, Blomfield and Arrabye 2011). Alternatively, depending on perspective, the UK and US Government could constitute a ‘them’ for those alienated by the strikes - either way it is likely to contribute to dichotomous identifications. To avoid this governments could be more open with regard to their role and details concerning the strikes and the news media should highlight where they fail to do so.

This lack of scrutiny of Pakistani, UK and US executive government is characteristic of a form of methodological nationalism - where transnational phenomena and the blurring of traditional boundaries are not recognised (Beck 2006, 24-32). However, this has led British MPs to call for more transparency: Rehman Chishti, a Conservative MP, stated that Government answers were not forthcoming and the on the day of the court judgement was quoted by *The Times* as saying: “It appears there is a cloud of secrecy over the policy, rules

and procedures for drone strikes... This lack of clarity is a vacuum that needs filling” (Coghlan 2012). Nonetheless, it is the promotion of news surrounding high-value-targets and the notion of precise drone strikes that provided some respite, if temporarily, to the anonymous government announcements and the uncertain style of reporting.

High-value-targets

High-value-target strikes were a key topos, or theme, in the discourse and this strengthened and predicated claims used in argumentation in favour of UAVs that strikes are precise and reduced levels of violence (see Strawser’s (2012) opinion piece in *The Guardian*). The most reported events were the drone strikes in Pakistan on Baitullah Mehsud, the leader of the Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik I Taliban Pakistan or TTP) on 9th August 2009, and on Abu Yahya al-Libi (then effectively number two in the al-Qaeda hierarchy) on 4th June 2012, reported in 22 articles each. Of note here is that the TTP was not a direct threat to UK or even US interests, but instead threatened the Pakistani state (Woods 2015, 155). Therefore the “us” here was formed in solidarity with the Pakistani Government’s immediate interests.

The quantity of UK news coverage for “decapitation” strikes (the killing of heads of organisations) can be contrasted with the fourteen drone strikes reported by international media throughout the months of March 2010 and March 2013 (TBIJ 2013) – where only one strike was reported in articles by the UK press. That strike, on 18th March 2010, which caused less fatalities (five) than most in those months, was reported in *The Sun* (2010) article entitled “TERRORIST DEAD” and by *The Daily Telegraph* (2010) as killing “al-Qaeda” leaders. *The Daily Telegraph*’s lead paragraph stated that “[a]n al-Qaeda leader believed to have played a key role in Afghanistan last December was killed by a missile strike last week”, thereby indirectly referring to a threat to UK troops in Afghanistan – ‘our’ troops for UK readers of UK news texts.

Although Anwar al-Awlaki was killed in Yemen, discourse on US drone strikes cannot ignore the large amount of coverage afforded to his death. The US born Islamic cleric was killed on 30th September 2011 and this was reported in 45 articles in the two days following the strike in the six UK news media outlets surveyed – these articles also stressed his threat to UK. The *Guardian* (2011) reported government comments: “He was also linked to failed plots to target British and European interests, say security officials” and a focus on violence and threats to the UK was also highlighted by *The Daily Mail* (Slack 2011) that listed al-Awlaki’s alleged orchestrations of airplane bomb plots. It is clear that acts that were deemed to impact on the immediate future security to an “us” community were given more coverage.

Events that involved a British target also received more publicity. For example, in the 12 articles in October 2010 reporting that one victim Abdul Jabbar had been planning to attack the UK (appendix). In these cases compassion towards the drone strike victims is less likely as victims are also aggressors and potential threats to “us”. The focus of the UK news media was on these threats, or the role of people as high-ranking leaders of threatening organisations. There was less coverage on the legal implications of the US Government executing Awlaki as one of its own citizens using a drone. In the UK news assessed here, this aspect was often ignored or relegated to a later position in the articles - for example, in *The Sunday Times* an article entitled “Saudi tip-off snared al-Qaeda preacher” considered the operation itself and Awlaki’s radicalising potential before finally making a comment on legality (Lamb *et al.* 2011).

Therefore, there was a focus on threats, and mostly those posed to ‘us’. Moreover, the nomination of the Other appeared to be dependent on who they were deemed to pose a threat to and how. For instance, al-Qaeda leader Abu Ya Ya Al-Libi was referred to as an “ideologue” in *The Guardian* (Burke 2012) and in *The Daily Telegraph* (Crilly and Islam

2012). Anwar al-Awlaki was also dubbed an “ideologue”, in a quote from former deputy head of MI6 in *The Daily Telegraph* (McElroy, Blomfield and Arrabye 2011). In fact, Awlaki’s role in the radicalisation of others in Europe and the United States was emphasised even more than Al-Libi’s. Therefore, in Awlaki’s case, the topos that drone strikes were killing radicalising ideologues supported argumentation that their killing would limit future radicalisation. For example, the Times (2011) led an editorial reporting the killing with the headline “The brand and ideology will soon be history”. In a similar vein, editorials in *The Sun* (2011b and 2011c) used headlines such as, “Evil unplugged” and “Fanatic killed”. Furthermore, Maajid Nowaz in *The Observer* described Al-Awlaki as “an evil man” (2011), thereby providing nominations that constructed an evil identity of al-Qaeda members. These reports implied that Awlaki was intelligent and manipulative in his ability to radicalise the impressionable amongst ‘us’, and his threat to the collective Self of ‘the West’ was highlighted in many articles (see McElroy, Blomfield and Arrabye 2011; or Slack 2011).

Nomination of the Pakistani Taliban and its leaders was distinctive to that of the al-Qaeda targets. In the large quantity of media coverage of deaths of leaders of militant organisations one typical nomination in the representation of a person from FATA was that of the Taliban warrior. The identity and way of being – or style, in Fairclough’s terms - ascribed to Waziris is one of an uncivilised culture, beyond the pale of civilisation. Declan Walsh writing for *The Guardian* (2009) described Baitallah Mehsud as a “border warrior turned high priest of suicide bombers” and goes on to describe his “career” as “brutal”. Mehsud was labelled a “murderous thug” by Robert Gibbs, a White House spokesman and this was reported in *The Times* (Hussain and Page 2009). Such descriptions stand in contrast to the lack of detail provided in describing other victims of drones strikes (see below) but there was also a difference in the nomination of al-Qaeda leaders that predicated notions of

their identity as evil and intelligent and highlighted their potential to radicalise Western victims.

The tabloid press were more explicit than broadsheets in their demonization of the Taliban and its leaders. Simon Hughes (2009) reporting for *The Sun* on August 8th labels Mehsud as a “warlord”. Hughes described how “Baitullah Mehsud, who commanded 20,000 blood-thirsty extremists ... provided havens for retreating Taliban forces to lick their wounds before returning to the attack.” The phrase “lick their wounds” suggests negative dog-like dispositions of a mass of irrational people. This failure to recognise the heterogeneity amongst the Other, even if they are considered an enemy, is a failure to engage with a fundamental characteristic of their humanity. Mehsud is represented as beyond reason and “beyond the pale” in this sense. Indeed, the entirety of North West Pakistan is frequently depicted as an “Other” place steeped in militancy and violence with little contextual explanation and routine broad brush descriptions – through the use of terms such as Pakistan’s “tribal badlands” (for example, see Declan Walsh in *The Guardian* [2009]).

By representing al-Qaeda leaders as evil ideologues, the notion that threats from within Western society emerge from dangerous individuals is promoted. It suggests that the leaders use ideology to manipulate others and this can transform members of ‘our’ peaceful community into radicalised Others. In contrast, representation of the entire community of Waziristan suggests violence and disorder are commonplace. This is distinct to the threats to Western society that are presented as rare anomalies posed by evil individuals. The distinction serves to underline a notion of the superiority of ‘our’ society in terms of the prominence of violence but also of the intelligence and extraordinary evil required to radicalise others within it.

Overall, the reporting of the killing of high-value-targets punctuates the uncertainty prevalent in the discourse with statements from authoritative sources supporting strikes. Yet

journalists and governments described the situations and people through a lens that was focused on risk and threat from the Other. The identity of Waziris is presented by journalists and governments negatively, largely through a focus on high-value-targets. Waziristan was represented as an Other place, and Taliban and Al-Qaeda Others were presented as a risk to “us”, “us” as the US, the UK or the non-Waziri Pakistanis.

2 Clinical genres of communication

Security scholars have noted how risk can become a “social technology” through which the uncertain future is rendered knowable and actionable and how this can impact on practices of government (Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and Van Munster 2008; Amore and de Goede 2008b). The last section demonstrated how perceived risks posed to ‘us’ were a key factor in news values and even in the nomination of the Other. According with this, in drones discourse, actors in all fields have commented on how risk is, or how it should be, minimised. As unmanned vehicles, drones avoid risk for any would-be pilot and therefore commentators such as the academic philosopher Bradley Strawser (2012), writing an op-ed in *The Guardian*, suggest this creates a moral obligation to use UAVs. Yet determination of risk factors in the context of scarce authoritative knowledge is problematic. Moves towards actuarial assessments of risk (Wall and Monahan 2011) enhance the idea that metrics can resolve contestation on issues of security. They promote the idea that somewhere there exists a repository of “objective” data that might resolve arguments through its truth effect, equivalent to the black box flight recorders that resolve mysteries of airplane crashes (Walters 2014, 113). This section demonstrates how in the search for clarity, genres of communication based on statistics and graphs are used across activist, governmental and news media fields. This use of statistics involves nomination in the categorisation of targets and also a clinical style of reporting the strikes. In turn, statistical data can enhance certainty and could be used as a topos in arguments either criticizing or supporting drone strikes.

Governments were not initially candid with data and it was activist groups and journalists that first demonstrated a cosmopolitan concern in public for casualties and compiled statistics on the number of civilians and non-civilians killed. Tracking organisations emerged that monitor and aggregate international news media reports on the number of categories of casualties in drone strikes. In February 2010, *The New America Foundation* (2010, 1) published a report on drone strikes since 2004 in Pakistan, that concluded:

between 830 and 1,210 individuals, of whom around 550 to 850 were described as militants in reliable press accounts, about two-thirds of the total on average. Thus, the true civilian fatality rate since 2004 according to our analysis is approximately 32 percent

Subsequently, *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ)* started reporting historical casualties on drone strikes in February 2011 and by 12th June 2013, the *TBIJ* reported that 2,548-3,549 had been killed, including 411-884 civilians and 168-197 children, with 1,177-1,480 reported injured. There is news value in this apparently factual and objective genre. Accordingly, these organisations are cited by the news media for a statistical overview of the drone programme and this informs discussions on legitimacy related to a cosmopolitan concern for casualties. These tracking organisations are referred to by academics (Plaw 2013) and other contributors to debates on drones, including the United Nations (TBIJ 2012). *The New America Foundation* is the most widely cited source in the US and UK media, for example in *The Times*, on 25th May 2013, when commenting on Obama's announcement of new "drone rules" (Pagnamenta 2013). Similarly, *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism* is described in academia as the "go-to source for data on CIA covert drone operations" (van Veeren 2013, 9). While the tracking institutions do not claim to provide definitive statistics, the possibility that the systems set up to compile these statistics are fundamentally inadequate is less recognised (Columbia Law School 2012, 14). Even the range of numbers provided by

the organisations does not allow for the fact that the figures are based substantially on news reports, with all their associated problems of gathering reliable information.

Yet, the statistics provide a reputable “fact” to cite in their claims surrounding drones. Van Veeren (2013, 9) argues that ostensibly statistics offer an “anesthetic experience of violence, one which is calculating, rational and irrefutable”. With statistical evidence the broader and more nuanced effects of drones, related to the suffering of relatives, the impact on society or the difficulties and implications of categorizing people as militant or civilian are often overlooked. Nomination distinguishing between civilians and militants, or combatants and non-combatants, perpetuates a tendency to place actors in these regions in one of two categories – a tendency which the news media contributes to and follows. Even predication by the placing of speech marks around the word “militant” or the even greater qualification in the term “suspected militant” as is regularly reported in the UK news media, still prompts binary categorisations that can be difficult to apply accurately and are often unchallenged despite being framed by quotation marks. For example, in the article headlined “*Pakistan drone raid ‘kills three militants’*” (BBC 2010a) there is no contextual information on why the people were labelled militants. Such binary categorisations in nomination can reinforce the construction of identities into Self and Other categories, despite the various roles adopted by governments involved in drone strikes and of those affected by the strikes.

The very question surrounding the nomination of a person as a “militant” or “non-militant” sets up a debate with an underlying assumption: that those who are defined as “militant” are viable targets,. Differentiating between militant and non-militant is necessary in a situation of armed conflict where international humanitarian law (the laws of war) is applied. However, if an armed conflict does not exist then only human rights law applies and this precludes extra-judicial killings outside of situations of self-defence (NYU and Stanford Law School 2012, 117). Therefore argumentation about who is categorised as “combatant”

or “militant” alludes to the notion that universal laws of war apply and that human rights, including the right to life do not. This allusion to a universal law predicates simplistic legal and moral evaluations, where actions are deemed to be either right or wrong.

Crude categorisations are repeated interdiscursively across fields and are more likely to justify stereotypical character assessments. In terms of policy, this can justify the use of “signature strikes”, as opposed to “personality strikes” on named individuals. A “signature strike” is where individuals may be targeted despite not knowing their name, but where their actions fit a profile that is considered likely to be linked with al-Qaeda and or other “militant” groups (Miller 2012). Academics Tyler Wall and Torin Monahan (2011, 251) argue that the attribution of group characteristics to individuals is a characteristic of risk societies where individual identification is subordinated to objectives of risk management of populations and groups. Actuarial assessments of risk are likely to reduce connections between Self and Other as they homogenize groups according to the risk assessments and inhibit more comprehensive understandings.

Amoore and de Goede (2008b, 6) note how risk-based calculative models and practices are increasingly being used in governance across society and they point to their use in the identification of suspicious populations and vulnerable spaces in the “War on Terror”. In the discourse, more rounded depictions of individual human beings belonging to structured societies in FATA are unusual. To exacerbate this reductionism, on the rare occasion that they are given a voice, quotes from locals are often anonymised as a collective group through statements such as “local people told the BBC earlier” (*BBC* 2009) or “[l]ocal tribesmen say the drones then fired another three missiles at their meeting, or jirga” (*BBC* 2011). Nomination where there is a failing to provide names of locals, referring to them as “tribesmen” or “local people” depicts none of the individual characteristics that people have and in that sense dehumanises the image of them created for the reader.

These factors ensure that news concerning drones is also largely anonymous and promoting anonymity is effectively an omission of nomination. Despite long established journalistic conventions to the contrary (Tuchman 1972), UK and international news media texts on drone strikes are filled with references to unnamed sources, if sources are referred to at all. In the news coverage sampled of drone strikes in North West Pakistan in March 2010 and March 2013 no single named source was found. In March 2010, all the six articles featuring on the *BBC* website referred to “local officials” or “security officials” as their key source. Lillie Chouliaraki (2006, 105) considers anonymous representations as follows:

The absence of a person, somebody with a name and a face, deprives the encounter between spectators and sufferers of any sense of humanness. Without the measure of psychological depth necessary for the welling up of emotion, the sufferers ... are annihilated.

In counterterrorism discourse the turn to statistics and categorisations has not facilitated the contextualisation and rounded coverage necessary to encourage connections between people as Selves and distant Others. The genres are less conducive to facilitating sympathy towards distant Others. Lillie Chouliaraki (2006, 106) has suggested that attempts to provide objectivity can be at the expense of emotionality. This can inhibit connections between Selves and distant Others and this section supports Chouliaraki’s assertion in the context of security. Activists, journalists and governments should be aware of the potential of this move towards objectivity with reference to statistic, categorisations and also, as the next paragraphs show, clinical imagery.

Sterile images

Images, as a genre of communication, could prompt a more emotive style of relations between Selves and distant Others than that provided by statistics, and it is to images that attention is turned to next. Critical discourse analyst, Norman Fairclough (1992, 4) traditionally focused on linguistic genres but he considered it “appropriate to extend the

notion of discourse to cover other symbolic forms such as visual images”. Indeed, Hoskins and O’Loughlin (2010, 30-31) argue that images are key drivers of representations in conflict, largely due to the accessibility to conflict zones for journalists and others with cameras combined with the dissemination capacity of the Internet. However, with lower Internet and mobile phone penetration across the FATA region communication through the genre of visuals exists on a lesser scale for people in the areas affected by drone strikes. Across the entirety of Pakistan 8% of people use the Internet regularly and of the 53% who own a phone only 19% regularly take photos (Pew Research Group 2014).

Accordingly, of the eight articles covering drone strikes by the BBC in March 2010 and March 2013 all featured stock images, that of a drone flying in blue sky or on the tarmac of an airport runway. The focus is on the drone as an object, a high-tech piece of clean technology (see images below), in stark contrast to the messy complexity into which it fires its missiles. This affirms Elspeth Van Veeren’s analysis of the visualisation of drones. Van Veeren states that “the most common way in which drones seem to be imagined, or made sensible, is through the presentation of drones as things; things that fly or things that sit” (Van Veeren 2013, 5).

<< Figure 1 to be inserted here >>

Figure 1. BBC News Website articles, 17th March 2010.

<< Figure 2 to be inserted here >>

Figure 2. BBC News Website articles, 22nd March 2013

Chouliaraki states that visuals are an opportunity to provide specificity and place individual images of the sufferers within their context (Chouliaraki 2006, 123). However, this opportunity is largely missed in the most prominent images of drone strikes. Alternative imaginaries have been constructed to counter the clean image of warfare that the predominant

image of drones presents, but van Veeren argues that “unlike campaigns such as Occupy or efforts to close Guantánamo, anti-drone campaigners have been less successful in finding a visual frame around which to mobilize”. She suggests activists have not found a “‘killer photo’ of a ‘killer drone’ and so struggle to disrupt the clean language and imagery of drone warfare” (van Veeren 2013, 3-9). Van Veeren argues that there are also imaginaries from the perspective of those based on the ground. The work of Noor Behram photographing the consequences of drones for the victims on the ground is an example of this. However, coverage of Behram’s less sanitized work in the news media is limited. In July 2011 the activist group Reprieve launched their campaign against drone strikes at a Behram photo exhibition and *Guardian* journalists (Shah and Beaumont 2011) reported on Noor Behram’s work but his pictures have not been used as widely in the news media as those generic clean pictures of UAVs themselves. Analysis of Tweets published by Reprieve found that many Tweets on drones were re-tweeted over a hundred times. However, Tweets with links to images of destruction caused by drones were unpopular. For example, Reprieve (2011) published a Tweet that stated “See the destruction wrought by US drones in Pakistan at @ReprieveUK exhibition from Thu <http://t.co/4SswkVX>“, but this was not retweeted. Unsanitised accounts were less likely to be repeated intertextually.

Graphic imagery of war has been labeled “war pornography”, where the trope of pornography is employed to imply that the imagery serves an apolitical, voyeuristic purpose (Zornik 2005). However, Sue Tait (2008, 101) argues that graphic images of war can also prompt alternative spectatorial positions. Tait suggests an “entitled gaze” - to compensate for censorship elsewhere; a “vulnerable gaze”; or, even a “responsive gaze” as a precursor for action can be elicited from the images. If such graphic images are only seen outside of the mainstream news media these alternative representations could erode trust in the UK news media to report accurately on conflict. If the news media are to successfully represent distant

suffering of Others, journalists should be aware of this and how sanitization could be depoliticizing or even lead to animosity towards the news media.

3 Drone strike in Datta Khel: challenging the order of discourse

Alternative discourses that made small challenges to the overall “order of discourse” on drone strikes were identified in the reporting of some events. For instance, the publication of the Stanford and New York universities’ report on the impact of drones on the everyday lives of Wazari people on 25th September 2012; or, the protest march led by Imran Khan and activists including Clive Stafford-Smith of Reprieve at the beginning of October 2012. Both events provided opportunities to involve the Waziri people more and stimulated some news media coverage. However, I have chosen to focus on the challenge to the order presented by the discourse surrounding the drone strike at Datta Khel, because of its interdiscursive impact in and beyond the news media. There was evidence of different styles, genres and discourses being employed and a nomination of Others that led to more contextualised representations to inform argumentation on drone strikes.

On 17th March 2011, a drone struck a gathering of approximately 40 men in Datta Khel, North Waziristan. The strike initially received scant publicity in the UK news media, but Pakistani official comment, investigative journalism and a judicial review launched through the UK courts had a significant impact on the discourse. These alternative sources of news story stimulated challenges to the received approach to news on Waziristan and when the order of discourse was challenged alternative representations and nominations of the Other were promoted.

A recognition of the diversity amongst the Other, where local specificities are appreciated, is key to culturally informed cosmopolitanism (Chen 1998, 4). In their reporting on the strike, the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sun* on 18th and 19th March 2011 respectively,

referred to “the lawless” region. Yet the Jirga that was taking place when the drone struck was established to administer a form of tribunal and debate. This could support the argument of anthropologist Akbar Ahmed (2013) that drone warfare creates more instability than it prevents. Ahmed describes the structure of tribal societies in FATA based on tribal elders (maliks), religious leaders and representatives of the central Pakistani Government (the political agent). However, these structures are severely threatened by the violence of tribal infighting, the Pakistani Taliban, the Pakistani Government and drones. Much of the FATA region operates under a set of laws set up by the British (the Frontier Crimes Regulations) where disputes are heard before male elders at an institution called the Jirga. Indicative of the failure of news to cultivate a cultural cosmopolitanism, the importance of such structures was rarely acknowledged in the UK news media output assessed.

The binary analysis promoted by assessments of threats and risks and the militant-civilian dichotomy is not often deconstructed in the UK news media. This inhibits a cultural cosmopolitanism where understanding between Self and Other is facilitated. There are various armed and, indeed, non-armed non-state groups operating in the FATA region. While these groups may be linked by a broad ideology, they differ in their approach to operational strategies and willingness to negotiate with the Pakistani Government - the Haqqani Network and Quetta Shura, are reported to have cooperated regularly with elements of the Pakistani authorities (Stanford and New York University Law School 2012, 18-20); but, they are considered the key players in the insurgency in Afghanistan (UK Border Agency 2013, 50). This can ensure that the US and Pakistani authorities, and factions within them, have different priorities when it comes to targeting drone strikes and then also in the communication of those strikes. With regard to the drone strike at Datta Khel, *The BBC* (2011) reported that members of a group led by Hafiz Gul Bahadur - that had fought

alongside the Afghan Taliban, but was amenable to deals with the Pakistani government - had been present at the drone strike.

The characteristics of discourse following this particular drone strike changed amid the context of the Pakistani authorities' encouragement and contributions to the denunciation of the strikes. The Pakistani Chief of Army Staff, General Parvez Kayani, issued a press release on 17th March 2011 that was directly quoted by the BBC in "Pakistan army chief Kayani in US drone outburst". The General is quoted in support of the social institution of the Jirga and of the importance of elders within that society, and furthermore, promoting the value of human life:

It is highly regrettable that a Jirga [meeting] of peaceful citizens including elders of the area was carelessly and callously targeted with complete disregard to human life.

In contrast to reporting by the BBC and other outlets on previous strikes, the BBC article report on 17th March 2011 featured a statement from local elders. The BBC reported the statement:

We are a people who wait 100 years to exact revenge. We never forgive our enemy...The world should try and find out how many of the 40-odd people killed in the drone attack were members of al-Qaeda...It was just a Jirga being held under local customs in which the prominent elders of Datta Khel sub-division, and common people were participating to resolve a dispute.

Unusually, the BBC gained access to a named individual, Malik Faridullah Wazir Khan, who describes graphic scenes after the drone strike of the injured and dead, preventing any sanitization of the imagery surrounding the strike. Furthermore the report featured a photo of the tribal leaders giving a press conference in Peshawar to the media.

<< Figure 3 to be inserted here >>

Figure 3. BBC News Website article, 18th March 2011

This case also stimulated alternative genres of news reporting beyond bulletins or press on the most recent news. Philip Elliot, Graham Murdock and Philip Schlesinger's (1996) found that different genres outside of regular TV news bulletins – such as documentary or current affairs programmes (for which they cite Panorama as an example) – provided opportunity for a broader range of voices or perspectives to be considered. I make a similar claim in the following paragraphs as I consider how investigative journalism for a Sunday newspaper and a Panorama programme facilitated deeper news reporting.

On 16th April 2011, in an article in *The Mail on Sunday* David Rose demonstrated the advantages of investigative reporting. In his article Rose provides contextual details about the event one month after it took place through interviews with senior members of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Rose recognized the importance of the Jirga in resolving local disputes:

There were more than 150 present, gathered to resolve a dispute over how much revenue each of several neighbouring clans was due from a chromite mine on the slopes of a nearby mountain.

In contrast to the majority of reporting on drone strikes Rose also cited a named local person. Moreover, Rose explores the political and recent historical context of the situation between the Americans and the Pakistani authorities, noting how drone strikes were more closely coordinated between the US and Pakistan until 2008 and how relations between them had deteriorated in 2011 after the imprisonment of CIA contractor, Raymond Davis, and following his release US drone attacks were back “with a vengeance”. Chouliaraki (2006, 150) outlines how such historicity is largely neglected from de-contextualised news and this article contrasts with other reporting on drones in this respect.

When the 17th March 2011 strike was considered in the UK legal field even more contextual information concerning the victims was given. Noor Khan, the son of a victim,

assisted by lawyers at Leigh Day and the activist group Reprieve, brought a legal complaint against the UK GCHQ for complicity in drone strikes that killed his father. He alleged that GCHQ provided locational intelligence to the US Government. The news media's contextual reporting changed when this case was considered in the UK courts. The genre of communication surrounding a court case related to legality of drones in the UK provided deeper insight and analysis. This style of analysis spread interdiscursively beyond the court and outside the legal field. On 24th October 2012, more insight into the daily lives of Waziris was given in a *Guardian* news article by Ian Cobain. Cobain (2012) reported that the complainant Noor Khan is the son of a drone strike victim and Khan is described as:

[living] in constant fear of a repeat of the attack in North Waziristan in March last year that killed more than 40 other people, who are said to have gathered to discuss a local mining dispute.

In addition to being cited in activist reports (see Stanford and NYU [2012], 57-62) and in the report of UN Special Rapporteur Ben Emmerson (UN Human Rights Council 2014), the discourse surrounding this strike was repeated through detailed and contextual reporting, including the use of more visual media. On 21st December 2012, the BBC Website gave significant background on Noor Khan's life and family including photographs and links to a BBC *Panorama* episode on drone warfare that contained a piece on Noor Khan's case (BBC 2012). Through the genre of a 30-minute television current affairs programme, *Panorama* reported that Malik Khan was one of 50 elders killed at the Jirga established to resolve a mining dispute. Noor Khan was interviewed on film, albeit with simultaneous translation, providing visuals to the audience of this man's testimony. Noor Khan is filmed stating that "[m]y father was working for the benefit of the community, he was a Councillor elected by the political administration – that was the sort of man he was". Noor Khan gives further perspective into the impact on the lives of those in the vicinity of a drone strike:

We can't go about our daily business or walk around freely – our lives have become a prison. These drones are constantly flying overhead. We can't offer our prayers, recite the Qu'ran and we can't even have meetings for fear of drone attacks.

Again the change of genre allowed for greater contextual reporting and engagement with the Other. Noor Khan's voice was broadcast and contributed to the broader UK media discourse surrounding deliberation on drones. In this sense the *Panorama* programme was contributing to a deliberated cosmopolitanism that gave voice to all those affected by policy. Aspects of life that were largely neglected by press reports on drone strikes were reported. As with the *Mail on Sunday* article and *BBC News* coverage, Pakistani military officials were prominent in the programme, giving interviews and in the *Panorama* programme providing security and access for the BBC journalists in Waziristan. It is therefore unsurprising that these reports all appeared to concur with the Pakistani's Government's official position opposed to drones and many of the criticisms of the Dhatta Khel strike could be used as topoi in argumentation against UAVs. This highlights the potential opportunity but also potential influence provided by actors who can control security on the ground.

Through the genre of BBC documentary more context and moving visuals and interviews with Noor Khan, facilitated connections to a degree not possible through press coverage. Coverage of the Noor Khan court hearings demonstrates how the news media provides deeper reporting when there is an "angle" that allows magnification of the news value of a particular story. In Noor Khan's case, connections with the Other were facilitated through alternative genres of reporting, including current affairs TV programmes, legal discourse and investigative journalism. News media outlets and activists should continue to use these avenues if they are to encourage more rounded representations of the Other, but they will need secure access to subjects of these stories and this may depend on government and other agencies.

Conclusion

The coverage afforded to drone strikes in Pakistan, in UK news media and other fields, was distinctive to that given to news from other areas of the world. The lack of images, contextual information, voices of Waziri people, or any representation of their agency- apart from violent actions – all contributed to the continued Othering of the region. Sentiment towards those subject to or instigating drone strikes could therefore be numbed and the people and the region be placed “beyond the pale”. The resulting uncertainty was punctuated with news of the killings of high-value-targets that implicitly became a topos that lent support to the argumentation in favour of drone strikes as a means to mitigating risks, particularly risks posed to “us”. Cosmopolitanism in news discourse surrounding drones was therefore not conspicuous.

Nonetheless, a consideration of intertextual relations has shed more light on how cosmopolitanism emerged and also faded through UK discourse on drones. There was a drive surrounding news discourse, emanating from activists and tracking organisations, to find more authoritative information on how the Other in Waziristan had been affected – a distinctly cosmopolitan concern. As activists and news media outlets developed ways of reporting on the drone strikes programme the legitimacy of policy could indeed be challenged on the basis that it put innocent lives of Others at risk. However, these genres did not facilitate rich connections between Self and Other in news discourse. Instead, through sterile statistical and visual genres of communication, dissonance was likely to be encouraged and the Other was presented through crude nominations and categorisations. These are assertions based on textual analysis, albeit it from intertextual analysis, but audience research in this area could corroborate these findings.

The constructivist approach to drone strikes adopted here has shown that distinctive approaches to the Other can emerge, and also how they can develop or be challenged.

Scholars of critical terrorism studies have noted the attribution of evil identity to perceived enemies before (Jackson 2005; Jarvis 2009, 134-146). Here Waziris or members of the Pakistani Taliban were depicted with nominations that suggested either brutish characteristics or, through anonymity, ignored their agency. This contrasted sharply with the intelligent, evil and manipulative traits attributed to al-Qaeda members. However, as other studies on counterterrorism have suggested, risk plays a key part (Amoore and de Goede 2008a). With regard to cosmopolitanism, it was apparent that imminent risk drove those connections that were made between Self and Other, either as a collective Self united against risks or by constructing an Other that posed a threat. Indeed, connections between the US and UK, as Western security partners, was represented particularly prominently. However, crucially, it was when key actors (US and Pakistani Governments) fundamentally disagreed on security operations – and on perceived threats and risk - that the order of discourse was challenged significantly. The Nour Khan litigation demonstrated how this could result in new genres of communication. These genres enabled richer connections between the Self and Other than the clinical statistical and visual modes analysed above. Whether similar dynamics are evident elsewhere in discourse surrounding the use of UAVs or airstrikes in other operations requires further investigation.

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Appendix

Total articles published in six news media outlets on two days following selected events related to US drone strikes		
Date	Event	Number of articles published
30/10/2006	Strike on Madrassa reportedly killed 81-83 people	22
22/11/2008	Strike allegedly kills British fugitive Rashid Rauf	13
23/06/2009	Strike on Niaz Mehsud funeral reportedly killed 67-83 people	2
07/08/2009	Strike kills Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud	22
1 st -31 st Mar 2010	All ten individual drone strikes in March 2010	11
06/10/2010	Announcement Briton killed by Drone planning UK attack	12
16/12/2010	Strike kills two Britons in Pakistan	9
17/03/2011	Strike at Datta Khel: Noor Khan's father and over 40 killed	5
30/09/2011	Islamist cleric Anwar al-Awlaki killed by strike in Yemen	46
04/06/2012	Abu Yahya Al Libi, Al Qaeda number two, killed by strike	22
25/09/2012	Stanford and NY University report published	4
06/10/2012	Pakistan's Imran Khan leads protest march against strikes	10
23/10/2012	UK High Court hears Noor Khan complaint against GCHQ	6
21/12/2012	UK High Court rejects complaint and refuses to adjudicate	4
1 st -31 st Mar 2013	Both drones strikes in March 2013	1
TOTAL		189
News articles were assessed from six outlets: (i) <i>The Guardian</i> and <i>The Observer</i> , (ii) <i>The Sun</i> and <i>The News of the World</i> , (iii) <i>The Daily Telegraph</i> and <i>The Sunday Telegraph</i> , (iv) <i>The Daily Mail</i> and <i>The Mail on Sunday</i> , (v) <i>The Times</i> and <i>The Sunday Times</i> (vi) the <i>BBC News website</i> .		

Figure Captions

Figure 1. BBC News Website article, 17th March 2010. (Rights and permission granted to the author by Getty Images and the BBC to reproduce the image).

Figure 2. BBC News Website article, 22nd March 2013. (Rights obtained by the author from the Press Association to reproduce the image).

Figure 3. Photo from BBC News Website article, 18th March 2011 (Rights obtained by the author from the Press Association to reproduce the image).